

The CASE of Mr. WALCOT,

Concerning his Making Sea-Water Fresh, Clear and Wholesome.

WILLIAM WALCOT of the Middle Temple Esq; the first and True Inventor of making Salt (and Putrefied) Water, Fresh, Clear, and Wholesome, did, in the Year 1675, make an Experiment of his said Invention, in the presence of His Sacred Majesty, King CHARLES the Second, of Glorious Memory, who was pleased Highly to approve thereof, and to Grant him His Letters Patents for the Sole Benefit for 14 Years, according to the Statute, therein Declaring, That, Our Trusty and Well beloved William Walcot, Esq; hath with long Study, and very Great Expence, Invented and brought to Perfection, the Art of making Water Corrupted fit for use, and Sea-Water Fresh, Clear, and Wholesome, in very Large Quantities, by such Ways and Means as are very Cheap and Easy, and which may be done and Practised with great Speed and Expedition, Some Evident Demonstrations whereof we have seen to Our Great Satisfaction, and do believe the same may prove very useful as well to Our Royal Navy, as also to all other Ships and Vessels belonging to Our Subjects, and likewise highly Advantageous to the Trade of our Subjects, and may tend to the Advancement of our Customs; and being, as we are Informed, never before Used or Known in any of Our Dominions, may likewise bring several other Considerable Advantages to Us and Our Subjects: And the said William Walcot hath assured Us, that he will make very Considerable and Useful Improvements for, and in order to the greater Ease and Conveniency in the Premises, &c.

Afterwards, by His said Majesties Leave, a Bill was brought into the Right Honourable the House of P E E R S, for Enlargement of the said Term; which Bill being once Read, is yet remaining there, till the Water might be Experimented at Sea.

Much Time was necessarily spent in procuring Instruments and Materials (by reason that no Artists had been accustomed to form such) fit to put in Practice (especially at Sea) so great an Invention.

Likewise, Many, Great and Unavoidable Obstructions (by reason of the newness of the Invention) he met with, as to the Practising thereof at Sea, of which he is ready to give a particular Account.

However, He Practised his said Invention several years on Land, and disposed of the Water to very many for their Use, and also sent some to Forreign Parts, which continued Sweet and Good.

Since which time Robert Fitz-gerald Esq; and Others, his Partners, have pretended to the said Invention (and Gained other Letters Patents, notwithstanding W. Walcot his Letters Patents were in Being) thereby Obstructing the said W. Walcot. This, at length, occasioned W. Walcot's repairing to Holland, in the Year 1684, where his Opposers were endeavouring to Obtain Letters Patents from the States of the United Provinces; and there, by a Petition delivered, on his behalf, to their Lordships, he Requested, that their Lordships would order both Parties to Appear before them to make publick Demonstrations of their said Arts; And, that upon the Judgments of their Lordships which of them both made the best Tryal with the least Charge, might fully Enjoy their Lordships Free Patent; which Request being Granted, the said W. Walcot, and Mr. William Fitz-gerald, deputed by the said R. Fitz-gerald and his Partners, did appear; and each made three several Experiments, One in presence of the Lords of the States General, and Two before the Members of the States of Holland, and of the several Provinces; at All which, the said W. Walcot gained such a Reputation, that he hath Obtained Letters Patents from the States General, To Him alone, with Exclusion of all Others. And in like manner, Other Letters Patents from each of the several Provinces of Holland, Zealand, Vriesland, &c.

These Transactions in Holland were not unknown to Their Majesties.

By All which it Manifestly Appears, That the said W. Walcot was the first Inventor (which hath been also Acknowledged by the said R. Fitz-gerald and his Partners) and is the only Person that ever truly attained to the Art of Making Sea-Water Fresh, Clear and Wholesome, in full perfection, which would have been in danger to be lost, if the said R. Fitz-gerald and his Partners, should have gained an Act of Parliament, according as they were endeavouring in the Year, 1685, and so to have Excluded the said W. Walcot, both from the Reputation and Advantage of the said Art, who had the Sole Right therein. To defend which he was forced to Return abruptly out of Holland, and to give his Attendance here since.

This likewise manifestly Appears, both to Seamen and others, by what the said R. Fitz-gerald and his Partners have done since, both at Sea and Land, throughout His Majesties Dominions, in their making many Tryals of their Skill, both in Ships and at Land, and in their several years Attempts of bringing their Work into a Constant and publick Practice, where none did Obstruct them.

SO that (as it is well known) the said W. Walcot hath employed a great part of his Life in the Inventing of this Art, and bringing it to so high a perfection, as to a practical use, and gaining it so publick a Reputation; All by his own Constant and Excessive Charges; much suffering also under the Interruption of such powerful Interests and Adversaries (whose chief Design was to force the said W. Walcot himself to make a Discovery to them of the Secrets of his Art; and failing thereof, to Entice his Workmen or Servants from his, to their Service; In vain endeavouring thereby to take the whole Advantages of his Charges and Labours to Themselves) whole Obstruction (they urging withall to have his Patent made void, that theirs might take place) hath and doth occasion this most grievous loss of time, in so Important an Undertaking. And makes him suffer likewise under the Censure of their Errors, and Miscarriages, through their want of Skill; Who thereby have, perhaps, brought a shrewd Undervaluing, and unjust Disparagement on the True ART; which, by reason of that Invincible Evidence, and so many publick Demonstrations that have been shewn, and such Testimonies and Attestations thereof, both at home and abroad, hath given such sufficient Assurance of its Reality and Worth, that it is hoped now it cannot reasonably be Questioned.

Therefore the said W. Walcot doth most humbly Desire there may be Provision made by an Act in Parliament, that he may be Restored to his Antient Right, and have his Term (which hath been thus unhappily interrupted) Renewed and Enlarged in such manner, That he may be encouraged and enabled to proceed to Exercise and Advance so Transcendent an ART at Sea as well as at Land, for the Universal Benefit.

The Lord Chandos his Testimonial concerning his long Experience of W. W. his Sea-Water.

THese are to certifye All whom it doth or may Concern, That before I was Honour'd with the Character of Ambassador from His Late Majesty of Blessed Memory to the Grand Signior of the Turks, I had the Satisfaction of several Tasts of my Worthy Friend William Walcot Esq; his Sea-water made Fresh, and Sweet, and to all Intents and Purposes equally made useful with the best Spring-water that e're I drank of in England for Land or Sea Service, as, upon above seven years Experience thereof at home and in foreign Parts, I am verily perswaded. For of the said Water I took with me some Quantity to Constantinople, and there upon Tryal thereof in the Presence of several Persons of Credit found it exceeding Sweet and Good, Insomuch that I had the Curiosity to try how long it would so preserve it self in that hot Climate: And in that Experiment also It so well answered my Expectation, that after near seven years keeping of it abroad, I brought of it home again with me: And now at this very Time have of it (viz. The Water I took out with me from the said Mr. Walcot) Right, Sweet and Good. In Witness whereof I here Subscribe my Name this 25th. of May 1688.

Chandos.

This agreeth with the original of his Lordships own Hand-writing.

The Exercise of this ART may be Beneficial to All, and will be Injurious to None.

THE Purity of the Water is Such, that the Spirit is preserved; In more than twice Seven years It hath not Putrefied, nor shewn any sign of Decay. It neither doth Taste New or Harsh when first Completed, nor Stale or Flat when long kept; but Smooth, and at all times alike.

The Testimonial of Mr. John Shiff, Chief Master Builder of His Majesties Yard at Deptford, concerning the working of W. W. his Instruments in Ships.

WHEREAS William Walcot Esq; hath often discoursed with me about his setting up of his Furnaces and Instruments in Ships for his Invention of making Good Fresh Water, and hath let me see his Furnaces, Instruments and Materials, and one Furnace in particular built upon Boards in a Room, which I see hath been much used with security from Danger of Fire: I do Certifie, that it doth appear to me, That he hath taken great Care, made many Industrious Contrivances, and Good Provision, for Safety and Conveniency of Working in Ships, and that he hath brought his Furnaces, Instruments, and other Materials (accommodating them to Ship-Service) and Manner of Placing them to a great Perfection. I do Certifie likewise that they may be set up in a Ship, without Damage or Injury to the Ship, with Security from danger of Fire, and able to endure the Motion and Tossing of a Ship at Sea. And that, in my Opinion, it will be of great Use to Navigation, as well to His Majesties Ships, as to others.

May the 13th. 1681.

John Shiff.

This agreeth with the Original.

He being sent for to give his Personal Attendance, Declared before the Commissioners of the Admiralty, That he would undertake to set them up in this manner in any of His Majesties Ships, if they pleased to assign him a Ship for that Purpose.